A method of emptying a container, and use of the method

The invention relates to a method of emptying a container for the storage of fish, such shellfish, said fish being stored in the container together with water, said emptying taking place through a pipe provided in the bottom of the container, a medium being supplied into the container during emptying.

Containers of this type, which may be made of plastics, are used for the ripening of e.g. shrimps. Typically, they have a size of 660 or 1000 litres and are emptied after completed ripening simply by tilting them.

For operational reasons, it is desirable to be able to ripe shrimps in larger containers, e.g. containers having a capacity of 12000 litres. However, containers of this size are not easy to handle in connection with empting where the container is to be tilted. It would therefore be an advantage if the container could be emptied through a pipe provided in the container. However, it has been found that, with so large containers for the storage of shrimps in water, emptying through the pipe will rapidly result in clogging, as the liquid will leave the container faster than the shrimps.

A container of the type defined in the introductory portion of claim 1 is known from DD Patent Specification No. 61451. In this method, a mixture of fish and water is pumped from a pipe located at the bottom of the container vertically upwards to a conveyor belt above the container, where water is conveyed back to the container, while the fish are transported further on.

Accordingly, it is an object of the invention to provide a method of emptying the initially mentioned large containers, which requires fewer installations, while maintaining a minimal risk of clogging.

The object of the invention is achieved by a method of the type stated in the

introductory portion of claim 1, which is characterized in that the medium is constituted by air, which is supplied through holes provided near the bottom of the container.

Hereby, emptying takes place through the pipe as a very homogeneous uniform mass without the pipe becoming clogged.

As mentioned, the invention also relates to use of the method. This use is defined in claim 3.

The invention will now be explained more fully with reference to the drawing, in which

fig. 1 shows the container according to the invention seen from the side in cross-section, while

fig. 2 shows the right-hand side of the container bottom seen from below relative to fig. 1.

In fig. 1, a container according to the invention is generally designated 1. As will be seen, the shown container has a vertical side wall 5 and a bottom 4 which are connected with each other by an inclined wall. A pipe is connected at the bottom 4, said pipe being intended for discharging e.g. shrimps admixed with ice/water.

With a view to avoid clogging of the container, the bottom and optionally the inclined walls are formed with holes through which a medium, such as air may be conveyed, indicated e.g. by the reference numeral 8.

As will be seen in fig. 2, the holes are here formed in a pattern which consists of two rows of holes 3, 7. These holes may be surrounded by a wall

(not shown), thereby creating a cavity through which a pipe stub may be connected for the admission of a medium, such as water or air under pressure.

Alternatively, a pipe distribution system (not shown) may be lowered into the container for the supply of water or air under pressure, which may e.g. be an advantage if existing containers are to be upgraded.

In addition, fig. 1 shows a pipe or hose 6 which is located at the bottom 4 and is intended to empty the container. Alternatively, the pipe or the hose may be disposed inside the container, as shown by the reference numeral 2.

When the contents of the container are to be emptied, water or air is optionally supplied via the hole-shaped pattern. It is ensured hereby that the pipe 2 of the container does not clog when its contents are discharged from the pipe 2 in the direction of the arrow 9.

The rate of this discharge may generally be increased if suction is applied to the pipe 2.

The container may be made of plastics or metal and have a size of e.g. 12000 litres.